

The Helping Relationship Questionnaire

In research on crucial first impressions that lead to successful therapy, psychologists Lester Luborsky, Paul Crits-Christoph and colleagues at the University of Pennsylvania have developed this questionnaire. A very important part of therapy is the goodness of fit between patient and therapist. After the first three sessions, taking this test may help you decide if you have the wrong therapist. If you do have concerns or doubts about your therapy, be certain to discuss them with your therapist.

Mark each statement about the relationship you now have with your therapist:	Yes, I strongly feel it is true	Yes, I feel it is true	Yes, I feel it is probably true	No I feel it is probably untrue	No, I feel it is untrue	No, I strongly feel it is untrue
1. I believe that my therapist is helping me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
2. I believe that the treatment is helping me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
3. I have obtained some new understanding.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
4. I have been feeling better recently	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
5. I can already see that I will eventually work out the problems I came to treatment for.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
6. I feel I can depend on the therapist	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
7. I feel the therapist understands me.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
8. I feel the therapist wants me to achieve my goals.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
9. I feel I am working together with the therapist in a joint effort.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
10. I believe we have similar ideas about the nature of my problems.	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3

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11. I feel now that I can understand myself and deal with myself on my own (that is, even if the therapist and I were no longer meeting for treatment appointments).	+3	+2	+1	-1	-2	-3
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TOTAL SCORE:

Scoring: Add up your total score.

- If your score is 22 to 33, Luborsky says that's a clear indication of a good therapeutic alliance.
- Scores below 11 suggest the therapeutic alliance is probably weak.
- Scores of 11 to 21 can't really be interpreted one way or the other.
 - Luborsky stresses this quiz is most useful after the first few sessions.
 - If you take it after you've been in therapy for a while, he says, transference may make the test results less significant.
 - If you do score low after many sessions, though, it's time to talk it over with your therapist--and discuss a second opinion.
 - Keep in mind you're not attacking the therapist's competence, just doubting that you are well matched.

The Helping Relationship Questionnaire, from Principles of Psychoanalytic Psychotherapy by Paul Luborsky, PhD.
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